

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

THE USE OF U.S. NAVAL SURFACE COMBATANTS  
IN THE MARITIME COUNTERNARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORT:  
A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE FLOW OF DRUGS

by

William R. Silkman, Jr.

LCDR, United States Navy

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

18 May 2001

Report Documentation Page		
<b>Report Date</b> 18052001	<b>Report Type</b> N/A	<b>Dates Covered (from... to)</b> -
<b>Title and Subtitle</b> The Use of U.S. Naval Surface Combatants in the Maritime Counternarcotics Interdiction Effort: A MAJOR Impact on the Flow of Drugs	<b>Contract Number</b>	
	<b>Grant Number</b>	
	<b>Program Element Number</b>	
<b>Author(s)</b> Silkman, Jr., William R.	<b>Project Number</b>	
	<b>Task Number</b>	
	<b>Work Unit Number</b>	
<b>Performing Organization Name(s) and Address(es)</b> Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207	<b>Performing Organization Report Number</b>	
<b>Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Name(s) and Address(es)</b>	<b>Sponsor/Monitor's Acronym(s)</b>	
	<b>Sponsor/Monitor's Report Number(s)</b>	
<b>Distribution/Availability Statement</b> Approved for public release, distribution unlimited		
<b>Supplementary Notes</b>		
<b>Abstract</b>		
<b>Subject Terms</b>		
<b>Report Classification</b> unclassified	<b>Classification of this page</b> unclassified	
<b>Classification of Abstract</b> unclassified	<b>Limitation of Abstract</b> UU	
<b>Number of Pages</b> 26		

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

<b>1. Report Security Classification:</b> UNCLASSIFIED			
<b>2. Security Classification Authority:</b>			
<b>3. Declassification/Downgrading Schedule:</b>			
<b>4. Distribution/Availability of Report:</b> DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.			
<b>5. Name of Performing Organization:</b> JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
<b>6. Office Symbol:</b> NWC Code 1C		<b>7. Address:</b> NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 686 CUSHING ROAD NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207	
<b>8. Title (Include Security Classification):</b> (U) THE USE OF U.S. NAVAL SURFACE COMBATANTS IN THE MARITIME COUNTERNARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORT: A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE FLOW OF DRUGS			
<b>9. Personal Authors:</b> William R. Silkman, Jr. LCDR			
<b>10. Type of Report:</b> FINAL		<b>11. Date of Report:</b> 18 MAY 2001	
<b>12. Page Count:</b> 25		<b>12A Paper Advisor (if any):</b> None	
<b>13. Supplementary Notation:</b> A paper submitted to the Faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy.			
<b>14. Ten key words that relate to your paper:</b> DRUGS, NARCOTICS, INTERDICTION, TRAFFICKING, COUNTERNARCOTICS, GIBRALTAR, ENFORCEMENT, MARITIME, NAVAL, COMBATANTS			
<p><b>15. Abstract:</b> <u>United States Code Title 10</u> specifically designated the Department of Defense as the single lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States. From a macroscopic view, although a record 60.2 metric tons of cocaine and 23 metric tons of marijuana were seized by maritime forces in 2000, an estimated 568 metric tons of cocaine slipped through the transit zone – more than enough to meet the demand. Continued funding and dedication of already over-tasked naval assets to this “war of attrition” does not appear, on the surface to be warranted. However, further research at the strategic, operational and tactical level using a variety of measures of effectiveness showed this was <u>not</u> the case.</p> <p>Based on the positive results, the evidence suggested that naval surface combatants make an irreplaceable contribution to the nation’s goal to shield America’s air, sea and land from the drug threat. These measurable results indicated not only that there is an effective presence with a high detection and monitoring rate of both air and maritime drug trafficking events, but the evidence also suggested that with increased interagency cooperation and continued focus on high-threat areas, the maritime STEEL WEB concept will eventually result in an overall reduced drug flow in the transit zone.</p>			
<b>16. Distribution / Availability of Abstract:</b>	Unclassified  X	Same As Rpt  X	DTIC Users  X
<b>17. Abstract Security Classification:</b> UNCLASSIFIED			
<b>18. Name of Responsible Individual:</b> CHAIRMAN, JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
<b>19. Telephone:</b> 841-6461		<b>20. Office Symbol:</b> NWC Code 1C	

## Abstract

# THE USE OF U.S. NAVAL SURFACE COMBATANTS IN THE MARITIME COUNTERNARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORT: A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE FLOW OF DRUGS

United States Code Title 10 specifically designated the Department of Defense as the single lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States. From a macroscopic view, although a record 60.2 metric tons of cocaine and 23 metric tons of marijuana were seized by maritime forces in 2000, an estimated 568 metric tons of cocaine slipped through the transit zone - more than enough to meet the demand. Continued funding and dedication of already over-tasked naval assets to this “war of attrition” does not appear, on the surface, to be warranted. However, further research at the strategic, operational and tactical level using a variety of measures of effectiveness showed this was not the case.

Based on the positive results, the evidence suggested that naval surface combatants make an irreplaceable contribution to the nation’s goal to shield America’s air, sea and land from the drug threat. These measurable results indicated not only that there is an effective presence with a high detection and monitoring rate of both air and maritime drug trafficking events, but the evidence also suggested that with increased interagency cooperation and continued focus on high-threat areas, the maritime STEEL WEB concept will eventually result in an overall reduced drug flow in the transit zone.

## Illustrations

Figure	Page
1. ONDCP Amount of Cocaine Removed: Percentage Point Increase Over Base Year by Year	4
2. DOT Maritime Drug Interdiction: Percent Seizure Rate By Year	5
3. Gibraltar Royal Police Drug Enforcement: Number Of Charges by Year	8
4. Gibraltar Royal Police Drug Supply & Trafficking: Number of Charges by Year	9

## **Introduction**

The use of naval surface combatants and associated organic air assets in a law enforcement role in counter-drug operations is not effective and should be discontinued. United States Code Title 10, Chapter 3, Section 124 specifically designated the Department of Defense (DOD) as the single lead agency of the Federal Government for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States.<sup>1</sup> From a macroscopic view, although a record 60.2 metric tons of cocaine and 23 metric tons of marijuana were seized by maritime forces in 2000, an estimated 568 metric tons of cocaine slipped through the transit zone - more than enough to meet the demand.<sup>2</sup> This evidence suggests that there is a large hole in the “shield” established to protect the United States from the threat of drugs. Continued funding and dedication of already over-tasked naval assets to this “war of attrition” does not appear, on the surface, to be warranted. Further research at the strategic, operational and tactical level using a variety of measures of effectiveness, however, showed this was not the case. Continued improvements in operational employment are warranted, but it appears that naval surface combatants play a major role in maritime interdiction and significantly contribute to the overall national drug control strategy.

On the national strategic level, naval surface combatants play a major role in one of the five strategic goals published as part of the national drug control strategy in 1997. Specifically, that goal is to shield America’s air, land and sea frontiers from the drug threat. The National Drug Control Strategy objectives that support this goal are to “conduct flexible operations to detect, disrupt, deter, and seize illegal drugs in transit to the United States and at U.S. borders; improve the coordination and effectiveness of U.S.

drug law enforcement programs with particular emphasis on the Southwest Border, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; improve bilateral and regional cooperation with Mexico as well as other cocaine and heroin transit-zone countries in order to reduce the flow of illegal drugs into the United States; and, support and highlight research and technology – including the development of scientific information and data – to detect, disrupt, deter, and seize illegal drugs in transit to the United States and at U.S. borders.’<sup>3</sup>

### **Evaluation of Effectiveness**

Due to the complexity of the problem, many factors can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of drug interdiction operations, including: (1) amounts of drugs seized; (2) fraction of interceptions or inspections that result in drug seizures; (3) fraction of drug shipments flowing in a conduit that are seized; (4) fraction of attempted drug shipments successfully flowing through a conduit; (5) smuggler’s markup in drug price when using a conduit; and, (6) fraction of total drug market flowing through a conduit.<sup>4</sup> Assumptions made based on current trends in drug trafficking as well as the specific performance measures of effectiveness already selected by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) greatly focused the measures used to evaluate maritime interdiction. First, heroin from Columbia is generally transported aboard commercial air flights and Mexican heroin is trafficked by land to the United States. Therefore, heroin drug seizures are not a good measure of maritime interdiction effectiveness. Second, bulk shipments of cocaine are sent to North America largely by sea, often using Mexico, Central American and Caribbean States as points of transit. Cocaine shipped by this route makes up the most significant portion of the maritime seizures. Third, shipments of marijuana from

Columbia are similar to cocaine trafficking patterns and should be considered in this analysis.<sup>5</sup> Fourth, the ONDCP has set specific measures of effectiveness to be met. By 2002, the target is to increase the proportion of cocaine and marijuana removed in transit by 10 percentage points above 1996 levels, and by 2007 increase this proportion by 20 percentage points.<sup>6</sup> Fifth, naval surface combatants also play a major role in detection and monitoring of air trafficking events and any associated results should be considered. Sixth, maritime interdiction must be viewed as a part of the overall national strategy, that also includes goals to “educate and enable America’s youth to reject illegal drugs as well as alcohol and tobacco, increase the safety of America’s citizens by substantially reducing drug-related crime and violence, reduce health and social costs to the public of illegal drug use, and break foreign and domestic drug sources of supply.”<sup>7</sup> An evaluation of success or failure of the overall drug control policy should not be used as the sole basis to measure the success of maritime interdiction efforts. Admiral James M. Loy, Commandant of the Coast Guard, argued in a speech addressed to members the United States Naval Institute in April 2001 that:

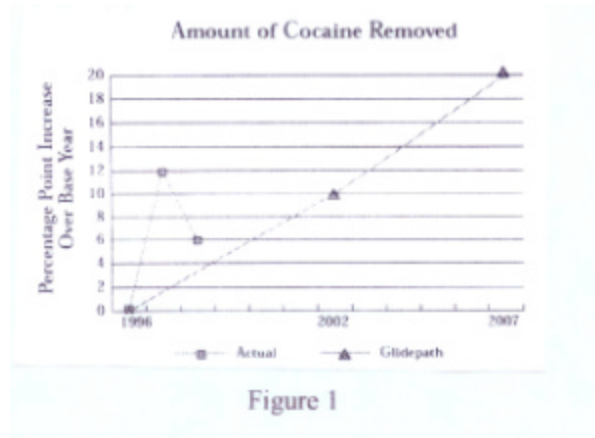
We begin by admitting that it (drug control) really isn’t a war. The “War on Drugs” is an unfortunate phrase because it conveys inaccurate ideas about the nature of the struggle and our efforts. Regardless of how successfully the national drug control strategy is implemented, we will grapple with drug control for the foreseeable future. Like the recovering alcoholic who never declares himself cured, our nation will never be able to pronounce the drug problem solved. It’s not a war...And so we can dispense with the delusion that interdiction--which reduces supply by confiscating drugs in transit between producers and retailer--does not contribute to controlling the nation’s drug problem. It does. Interdiction is not misguided. What is misguided is the notion that human ingenuity could create enough public education and treatment programs to create a culture that wouldn’t consume an abundant supply of drugs that arrived on our shores unconstrained by a coordinated interdiction program.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, in order to assess the ability of the maritime interdiction forces to meet the objective of conducting flexible operations to detect, disrupt, deter, and seize illegal



drugs in transit to the United States, the “war” on drugs should be viewed as a campaign with a series of major operations, each of which has shown measurable results within the specific area of operations. Using these assumptions and specified measures, the following paragraphs show qualitative and quantitative results of maritime interdiction.

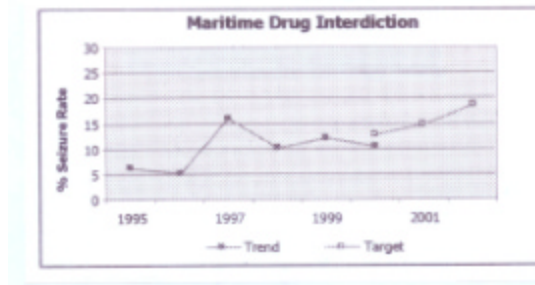
At the national strategic level, ONDCP estimated that in 1996 29% of cocaine en-route to the U.S was removed (165 metric tons removed/567 metric tons inbound). For 1997, 41% of cocaine en-route to the U.S. was removed (213 metric tons removed/524 metric tons inbound and for 1998 that 35% was removed (196 metric tons removed/553 metric tons inbound) as shown in Figure 1.<sup>9</sup> These levels exceeded the national target and can be qualified as a success.



Source: ONDCP National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report

Maritime interdiction performance measures established by the Department of Transportation for U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments and actual results are shown in Figure 2. The drug seizures recorded for 1999 (Target 12.5%/Actual 12.2%) and 2000 (Target 13%/Actual 10.6%) fell short of the established targets. However, a record amount of 60.2 metric tons of cocaine was seized in the year 2000, resulting from a greater patrol effort in the eastern Pacific Ocean, improved intelligence

sharing and better cooperation with source and transit countries.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, during the period from 1992 to 1999 the number of DOD ship days devoted to interdiction declined 62 percent and associated organic helicopter (SH60B) flying hours declined by 74 percent.<sup>11</sup>



Source: DOT Fiscal Year 2000 Performance Report

Figure 2

The DOD has begun development of its own measures of effectiveness in response to criticism in a U.S. General Accounting Office report that stated that DOD has not developed performance measures for drug interdiction.<sup>12</sup> Although not yet published, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Drug Enforcement Policy and Support released preliminary data in testimony before the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Drug Policy, and Human Resources in January 2000. The data showed that the interagency success in detecting and monitoring airborne cocaine trafficking events in the transit zone increased from 68% of known smuggling events in fiscal year 1995, when this data collection process started, to 91% in fiscal year 1999. The data also showed that the detection of known non-commercial maritime cocaine smuggling in the transit zone increased from 25% in fiscal year 1995 to 56% in fiscal year 1999. Of these detections, 17% of the airborne events and 41% of the

maritime events were interdicted successfully by host nation and U.S. law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the DOD asserted that 100% of the detections were handed off to law enforcement agencies for interdiction. The reason for the disparity between detection and successful interdiction is that law enforcement capabilities cannot keep up with DOD detection and monitoring results. Earlier results from 1997 also supported this assertion. Of 16 known events that occurred in 1997, there were three successful interdictions that resulted in seizure of approximately 22 metric tons. However, the Joint Interagency Task Force - East (JIATF-E) had intelligence on five other events that were not interdicted, resulting in the successful delivery of 37 metric tons of cocaine.<sup>13</sup>

The Drug Enforcement Administration, JIATF-E and the U.S. Customs Service conducted OPERATION JOURNEY from 1998 to 2000 that resulted in the complete shutdown of one conduit of maritime drug trafficking. A Colombian drug organization used commercial vessels to haul cocaine to 12 countries in North America and Europe. Close cooperation between U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies and naval surface combatants from the United States Navy and the British Royal Navy under the tactical control of JIATF-E resulted in the seizure of over 16 tons of cocaine from the Netherlands to Venezuela, the arrest of 40 individuals including the alleged leader of the maritime drug transportation organization, commercial shipping vessels, five “go fast” low observable speed boats, and communications equipment.<sup>14</sup>

The U.S. Coast Guard strategy STEEL WEB, complementing the operation of JIATF-E and JIATF-W, involves denying drug smugglers access to maritime routes by disrupting drug traffic significantly, thereby establishing a credible law enforcement presence. Interdiction forces are then redeployed to other high-threat areas. Over the

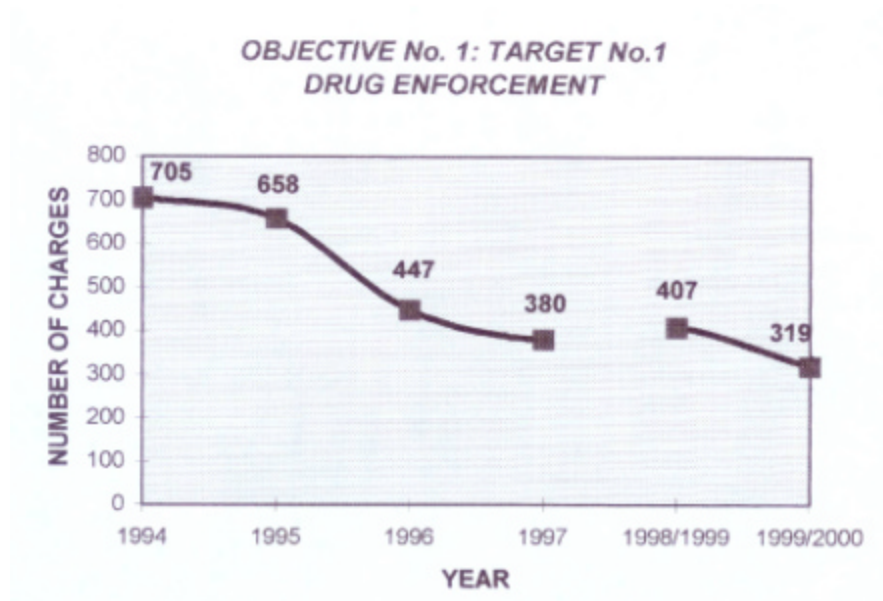
course of the campaign, these pulse operations systematically reduce drug flow through the transit zone. As examples, in 1997 Operation FRONTIER SHIELD and in 1998 Operation FRONTIER LANCE were conducted as limited pulse operations along the southern coast of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Intelligence estimates showed a dramatic decrease in direct movement of cocaine to Haiti and the Dominican Republic.<sup>15</sup>

On the tactical level, naval surface combatants are clearly making a steady contribution to maritime interdiction efforts. A review of the major successful interdictions in the first four months of fiscal year 2000 showed that naval surface combatants with assigned U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments accounted for over 25% of the total interdictions. U.S. Navy surface combatants seized approximately 10.4 metric tons of cocaine, 76 bales of marijuana, 40 gallons of hashish oil, nine “go fast” boats, four logistics support vessels, and resulted in the arrest of over 20 suspected drug traffickers.<sup>16</sup>

In May 2001, the ONDCP released data in the National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report that showed that maritime interdiction set a record for the second consecutive year, seizing over 60.2 metric tons of cocaine which was a 19% increase over 1999.<sup>17</sup> This, in conjunction with successes in shaping the production side of the equation such as the reduction of coca production in Peru and Bolivia by approximately 70 percent from 1995 to 2000<sup>18</sup>, allow greater focus on narrowing high threat areas. This will inevitably result in a more effective maritime interdiction effort. The factor of space is becoming an advantage for interdicting maritime forces.

## Gibraltar Royal Police Drug Interdiction – A Case Study

Although the previous evaluation is positive, there is certainly room for improvement. In an effort to make some concrete recommendations on how to increase the effectiveness of maritime interdiction efforts, a search was made for a case study showing measurable results by law enforcement against maritime drug trafficking. The example chosen was the dramatic decline in drug trafficking and incidence of drug misuse activity in Gibraltar since 1994. The steady decline in drug supply and trafficking arrests shown in Figure 3 as well as the decrease in incidences of drug misuse shown in Figure 4 over those six years was significant and warranted analysis to determine the reasons for success.<sup>19</sup>



Source: [Gibraltar Royal Police, Annual Report 1999/2000](#)

Figure 3



Source: Gibraltar Royal Police, Annual Report 1999/2000

Figure 4

In order to put this study in perspective, some background information is provided. Gibraltar is a small country encompassing about 6.5 square kilometers, with a land boundary of 1.2 kilometers and a coastline of 12 kilometers with a territorial sea claim of three nautical miles. The country has a population of approximately 30,000.<sup>20</sup> The land border is effectively closed to drug trafficking due to strict border controls and rigorous inspections. There is only one airport. The size of the police force (approximately 200 police officers), and the level of enforcement effort remained fairly constant over the period analyzed. Because of these factors, Gibraltar presents a very pure study in maritime interdiction efforts. The following paragraphs demonstrate some of the reasons that the national drug control policy of Gibraltar has been extremely successful.

One of the advantages is that the Gibraltar National Drug Control Strategy is very simple. Code-named OPERATION TRIANGLE, it consists of three main

initiatives—Enforcement, Education and Awareness. The policing plan consists of six clearly defined objectives in three categories—Crime, Traffic and Public Reassurance. With regard to illegal drug use and trafficking, the objective is to target the misuse of drugs and to promote awareness and prevention of drugs misuse among the community.<sup>21</sup>

A second advantage of the policing plan is that the measures of effectiveness are easily measurable and are action oriented, specifically designed to maintain and/or increase results of previous years. The three targets established in the most recent policing plan are to: (1) maintain the level of anti-drugs misuse enforcement exercised in 1999/2000; (2) to increase the number of arrests for drug supply and trafficking by 5% over 1999/2000 figures; and (3) to introduce the drug misuse initiatives in partnership with the Government, other agencies and the public (as measured by the number of initiatives implemented).<sup>22</sup>

A third advantage of the policing plan is a very effective interagency relationship. The Gibraltar Coordinating Center for Criminal Intelligence & Drugs (GCID) was established in early 1997 to coordinate the gathering, analysis and use of criminal intelligence. Officers from the Gibraltar Royal Police, Gibraltar Services Police, Gibraltar Customs and the United Kingdom's HM Customs and Excise man the GCID. Some of the objectives of the GCID are to: (1) further enhance the reputation of Gibraltar as a center of excellence in international cooperation in relation to drug trafficking; (2) acquire and develop intelligence relating to drug trafficking; (3) to provide law enforcement agencies with refined intelligence relating to drug trafficking with a view to the arrest of those involved, or to the disruption of illegal enterprises. It accomplishes these objectives by: (1) accepting tasking by Gibraltar based or other

enforcement agencies with a view to enhancing intelligence concerning persons suspected of drug trafficking; (2) initiating intelligence gathering and development concerning the activities of drug traffickers with a view to promoting action by enforcement agencies; (3) enhancing relationships with international law enforcement agencies; (4) developing a network of information sources relating to drug trafficking; (5) developing gateways to relevant databases; and, (6) establishing a database concerning persons suspected of involvement in drug trafficking.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, and most importantly, in July 1995 the Gibraltar legislature passed an amendment to a 1986 imports and exports ordinance that prohibited importation of rigid inflatable boats of 6 meters or more in overall length or any adaptation of such a boat. The objective of the legislation was to eliminate those boats that had a speed advantage over the Gibraltar Royal Police launches. These rigid inflatable boats were the Gibraltar drug trafficker's equivalent of the Columbian "go-fasts". Enforcement of the subject legislation resulted in the seizure of 65 such boats, giving a decisive, and irreversible advantage to the offensive efforts of the Gibraltar Royal Police in active maritime drug interdiction.<sup>24</sup> Instead of attempting to gain the advantage through improved technology in maritime interdiction capability, the Gibraltar government, in one fell swoop, eliminated the drug trafficker's long-standing advantage.

### **Opposition to Continued Use of Naval Surface Combatants**

There are several opposing views to the use of naval surface combatants in a law enforcement role in counter-narcotics interdiction. The first, that interdiction is a war of attrition that the United States cannot win, was previously addressed. The other two



primary objections to the continued allocation of naval surface combatants to this operations are: 1) Naval personnel assigned to surface combatants are not trained for a law enforcement mission and are prohibited by DOD policy from performing law enforcement functions; and, 2) Assignment to counter-narcotics operations results in a decreased training readiness of the ships involved because it draws them away from primary missions.

In response to the first concern, the Surface Warfare Officers School Command curriculum includes training on counter-narcotics operations at all levels of the leadership continuum – Division Officer, Department Head, Prospective Executive Officer and Prospective Commanding Officer. Each surface combatant is required to have at least one qualified boarding team that has attended a formal Vessel Boarding Search & Seizure School, focusing on skills that can be used for both Maritime Intercept Operations and Counter-narcotics operations. Additionally, a fraction of the ship's self defense force has attended other courses such as the Shipboard Security Engagement Tactics and/or the Shipboard Security Engagement Weapons Course, learning many tactics that apply to counter-narcotics boardings. Finally, U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments, by law, carry out the actual law enforcement functions. These teams are made up of nine highly trained law enforcement professionals. These teams also provide detailed briefings and training for the crews of naval surface units assigned to counter-narcotics interdiction.

To address the second concern, a survey was sent to a ship that recently returned from a successful counter-narcotics deployment. The ship was deployed for approximately five months to the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific. The ship's crew

conducted a total of ninety-three queries of suspected vessels. Of these, nine vessels were boarded, resulting in three successful drug seizures totaling over 4.5 metric tons. Overall, quantitatively (as measured by numerical M-rating), the ship's training readiness remained at the highest possible level in all warfare areas. In general, however, the ship operated in an independent steaming mode, and focused on training within the lifelines that required no outside assistance. The undersea warfare mission area was slightly degraded, mostly due to a lack of live submarine services. To compensate, the ship used available training assets to fill the void, including embedded onboard training devices, Air National Guard assets operating out of Aruba and Manta for air defense training and coordination with P-3 aircraft operating in support of counter-narcotics operations. Qualitatively, the ship's leadership assessed that due to the relative isolation of the operations, the crew lost some proficiency at formation maneuvering, and surface and air contact management compared to operations within a battle group setting. However, these drawbacks are not unique to counter-narcotics operations and apply equally to many other operations not associated with battle group workups and deployments.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, by law (U.S. Code, Title 10, Chapter 18, Section 376), the military cannot provide support to civilian law enforcement agencies if it will adversely affect the military preparedness of the United States.<sup>26</sup>

## **Recommendations**

Based on the overall evaluation of effectiveness, amplified by lessons learned from the Gibraltar Royal Police case study, the following recommendations are made to improve the overall effectiveness and employment of naval surface combatants in

counter-narcotics operations: 1) Available forces should be allocated to meet counter-narcotics functional plan requirements; 2) Several specific measures can be taken to improve the coverage afforded to detection and monitoring that can act as significant force multipliers; 3) A degree of simplification of the national drug control strategy and associated performance measures of effectiveness could result in improved effectiveness; 4) An objective should be added to reduce the tactical advantage of the drug traffickers by eliminating the “go-fasts”; and 5) Joint doctrine needs to be updated to reflect the current trends in maritime drug trafficking to ensure the correct threat is identified.

Assets are not being allocated to meet the needs of the unified commanders to support their counter-narcotics plans. In 1999, Commander, United States Southern Command reported that the DOD was unable to meet 57% of the command’s requests for assets to support detection and monitoring responsibilities. In 1997 and 1998, a successful maritime interdiction effort in the Eastern Pacific could not be pressed home because of a lack of available assets.<sup>27</sup> Evidence suggests that there is a close correlation between assets applied to maritime interdiction and drug seizures. For example, between fiscal years 1992 and 1995 total ship-days devoted to counter-narcotics operations declined from 4400 ship-days to 2800 ship-days (36% decline). Over that same period, drug seizures decreased from about 70,000 kilograms to 37,000 kilograms (47% decline).<sup>28</sup> Therefore, as national military priorities allow, available assets should be allocated to meet the established operational and functional counter-narcotics plans.

The next several recommendations deal with measures that could be used to fill the gaps in maritime detection and monitoring coverage and should be pursued. First, Joint Pub 3-07.4 recognizes the use of ships of opportunity. In other words, ships that are

operating in or transiting through possible trafficking areas that are not under tactical control of the Joint Interagency Task Force or U.S. Coast Guard command could be used for possible missions.<sup>29</sup> Next, on any given day there are significantly more ships underway than those specifically assigned to counter-narcotics operations. For example, as of 7 May 2001, 161 of 316 ships were underway away from homeport.<sup>30</sup> Every ship underway should be tasked to provide as much information on every surface and air contact, especially information useful in the counter-narcotics effort such as vessel name, size of vessel, nation/port of registry, vessel flag and any other distinguishing or unusual characteristics. Bridge watch teams obtain much of this information as part of routine observation of passing vessels or as part of bridge-to-bridge conversations concerning maneuvering intentions. However, rarely is this information passed to Combat Information Center watch standers to enter into the Global Command and Communications System, resulting in a tremendous loss of valuable information. Finally, all available intelligence information on counter-narcotics critical contacts of interest and contacts of interest should be passed to all ships underway, not just those specifically assigned to counter-narcotics operations. These three measures, reasonably simple to execute, represent a significant force multiplier in the detection and monitoring of suspect vessels in all theaters of operation.

The national drug control strategy is extremely complex. There are five strategic goals, supported by thirty-one objectives and measured by ninety-seven performance targets. Many of the performance targets, such as to develop interagency drug flow models, identify and inventory intelligence and investigative interagency relationships, and develop and deploy over-the-horizon tracking technology, are one-time tasks as

opposed to ongoing measures of effectiveness.<sup>31</sup> Simplification of the system for measuring effectiveness to focus on those targets that directly assess the reduction of drug supply and trafficking could result in more efficient and effective implementation at all levels.

An objective exists to research and develop new technology to reduce the supply of illegal drugs. The Coast Guard has obtained a number of fast speed deployable pursuit boats in order to counter the “go-fast” vessels. What is missing is an effort to reach agreements with host nations to enact Gibraltar-like legislation to outlaw, deregister and seize the “go-fasts”, giving the advantage to the interdiction assets. This could obviate the perceived need for the United States to develop faster pursuit boats, and the unnecessary expense of the resulting “arms race” that may occur to develop technology to out run the “go-fasts”.

Finally, joint doctrine is outdated and no longer reflects the current trends in drug trafficking. Several significant changes have occurred since the joint counter-drug operations doctrine was published in February 1998. Joint Pub 3-07.4, Chapter II, “General Threat” identified the major threat with respect to overall, worldwide production leaders; not with respect to those that specifically posed a direct threat to the United States.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the relative importance of some threat areas has changed; Columbia has overtaken Peru as the leading producer of cocaine and Afghanistan has risen to be the leading producer of heroine. The doctrine could be improved to focus more on those high threat areas that directly contribute to the drug flow into the United States. Columbia now supplies an overwhelming majority of the cocaine flowing into the

United States by land and sea. Columbia and Mexico supply an overwhelming majority of the heroine and marijuana flowing into the United States by land and sea.<sup>33</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Based on the positive results at all levels of the drug interdiction campaign, the evidence suggests that naval surface combatants make an irreplaceable contribution to the nation's goal to shield America's air, sea and land from the drug threat. These measurable results indicate not only that there is an effective presence with a very high detection and monitoring rate of both air and maritime drug trafficking events, but the evidence also suggests that with increased interagency cooperation and continued focus on high-threat areas, the maritime STEEL WEB concept will eventually result in an overall reduced drug flow in the transit zone. United States Naval surface combatants are, and will continue to be, the best command, control, communications, intelligence, and air and maritime surveillance platforms for conducting the maritime interdiction effort.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>General Military Law, U.S. Code, Title 10, sec. 124 (1989).

<sup>2</sup>Department of Transportation, Fiscal Year 2000 Performance Report/Fiscal Year 2002 Performance Plan (Washington, DC: 2001), 138.

<sup>3</sup>Office of National Drug Control Policy, National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report (Washington, DC: 2000), E-93 to E-108.

<sup>4</sup>Carl H. Builder, Measuring the Leverage: Assessing Military Contributions to Drug Interdiction, MR-158-A/AF, (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993), 22.

<sup>5</sup>Department of State, 2001 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Policy and Program Developments (Washington, DC: 2001), 1-28.

<sup>6</sup>National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report, E-95 to E-97.

<sup>7</sup>Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Counterdrug Operations, Joint Pub 3-07.4 (Washington, DC: 17 February 1998), I-2.

<sup>8</sup>Admiral James M. Loy, "Speech before the U.S. Naval Institute", Winning the Drug War, 27 April 2000, <<http://www.uscg.mil/Commandant/Speeches/USNIDrugWar4-27.html/>> [22 April 2001].

<sup>9</sup>National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report, E-95.

<sup>10</sup>Fiscal Year 2000 Performance Report/Fiscal Year 2002 Performance Plan, 138.

<sup>11</sup>General Accounting Office, Drug Control: Assets DOD Contributes to Reducing the Illegal Drug Supply Have Declined, Report to Congressional Requestors, (Washington, DC: 1999), 15.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, 10.

<sup>13</sup>Ana Maria Salazar, "Statement", U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Government Reform, Hearing Before Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, <<http://www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/lrs/docs/test00-01-27Salazar.htm/>> [29 April 2001].

<sup>14</sup>"Drug Enforcement Administration Press Releases", Operation Journey Dismantles Columbian Organization that Shipped Cocaine to 12 Nations, 26 April 2000, <<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/pressrel/pr082600.htm/>> [22 April 2001].

<sup>15</sup>Rear Admiral Norman T. Saunders, “Statement”, U.S. Congress, Hearing Before Caucus on International Narcotics Control, Miami, FL, 22 June 1998 <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g%2Do/g%2Dopl/testimony/22jun98.htm/>> [18 March 2001].

<sup>16</sup>“U.S. Coast Guard Operations Highlights”, U.S. Coast Guard Command Center Highlights: Law Enforcement, October 1999 through January 2001, <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/commandcenter.htm/>> [26 April 2001].

<sup>17</sup>Office of National Drug Control Policy, National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report, Report on Programs and Initiatives, (Washington, DC: 2001), 1-9.

<sup>18</sup>2001 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Policy and Program Developments, 1-28.

<sup>19</sup>Gibraltar Royal Police, Gibraltar Royal Police Annual Report 1999/2000, (Gibraltar, UK: 2000), 49.

<sup>20</sup>Central Intelligence Agency, CIA World Factbook 2000 – Gibraltar, <<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gi.html/>> [24 April 2001].

<sup>21</sup>Gibraltar Royal Police Annual Report 1999/2000, 1-49.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Government of Gibraltar, The Gibraltar Co-ordinating Centre for Criminal Intelligence & Drugs Mission, <<http://www.gibnet.com/gcid/mission.htm/>> [7 May 2001].

<sup>24</sup>Maria Luisa Torres, Personal Secretary to Commissioner of Gibraltar Royal Police, <[jullger@gibnynex.gi](mailto:jullger@gibnynex.gi)>, “US Naval War College Research Project”, containing excerpts from “Gibraltar Royal Police Annual Report 1996” and “Imports and Exports Ordinance 1986: Imports and Exports (Control) (Amendment) Regulations 1995” [E-mail to William Silkman <[WRSilkman@prodigy.net](mailto:WRSilkman@prodigy.net)>] 2 May 2001.

<sup>25</sup>LT Hamilton, Training Officer USS Boone, “Answers to CDOPS Questions FM Boone”, containing answers to survey questions asking for days assigned, number of queries, number of boardings, amount of seizures, areas assigned, impact on training readiness, recommendations to improve effectiveness, [E-mail to William Silkman <[WRSilkman@prodigy.net](mailto:WRSilkman@prodigy.net)>] 9 May 2001.

<sup>26</sup>General Military Law, U.S. Code, Title 10, sec. 376 (1988).

<sup>27</sup>Drug Control: Assets DOD Contributes to Reducing the Illegal Drug Supply Have Declined, Report to Congressional Requestors, 12-20.



<sup>28</sup>Jess T. Ford, “Statement”, U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Drug Control – Observations on U.S. Interdiction in the Caribbean, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs and Criminal Justice, 23 May 1996, 1-7.

<sup>29</sup>Joint Counterdrug Operations, E-1.

<sup>30</sup>United States Navy, Chief of Information, Status of the Navy as of May 7, 2001, 7 May 2001, <<http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/news/www/status.html>>, [11 May 2001].

<sup>31</sup>Office of National Drug Control Policy, National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report, Performance Measures of Effectiveness, (Washington, DC: 2000), 1-40.

<sup>32</sup>Joint Counterdrug Operations, II-1 through II-13.

<sup>33</sup>2001 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Policy and Program Developments, 1-28.

## Bibliography

- Berenstein, Paula. Finding Statistics Online. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc., 1998.
- Builder, Carl H. Measuring the Leverage: Assessing Military Contributions to Drug Interdiction. MR-158-A/AF. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1993.
- Central Intelligence Agency. CIA World Factbook 2000 – Gibraltar.  
<<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gi.html/>> [24 April 2001].
- General Military Law. U.S. Code, Title 10, sec. 124 (1989).
- General Military Law, U.S. Code, Title 10, sec. 376 (1988).
- Gibraltar Royal Police. Gibraltar Royal Police Annual Report 1999/2000. Gibraltar, UK: 2000.
- Government of Gibraltar. The Gibraltar Co-ordinating Centre for Criminal Intelligence & Drugs Mission. <<http://www.gibnet.com/gcid/mission.htm/>> [7 May 2001].
- Hamilton, LT. Training Officer, USS Boone, “Answers to CDOPS Questions FM Boone”, containing answers to survey questions asking for days assigned, number of queries, number of boardings, amount of seizures, areas assigned, impact on training readiness, recommendations to improve effectiveness. [E-mail to William Silkman <[WRSilkman@prodigy.net](mailto:WRSilkman@prodigy.net)>] 9 May 2001.
- Loy, Admiral James M. “Speech before the U.S. Naval Institute”. Winning the Drug War. 27 April 2000.  
<<http://www.uscg.mil/Commandant/Speeches/USNIDrugWar4-27.html/>> [22 April 2001].
- Torres, Maria Luisa. Personal Secretary to Commissioner of Gibraltar Royal Police. <[jullger@gibnynex.gi](mailto:jullger@gibnynex.gi)>. “US Naval War College Research Project”, containing excerpts from “Gibraltar Royal Police Annual Report 1996” and “Imports and Exports Ordinance 1986: Imports and Exports (Control) (Amendment) Regulations 1995”. [E-mail to William Silkman <[WRSilkman@prodigy.net](mailto:WRSilkman@prodigy.net)>] 2 May 2001.
- U.S. Coast Guard. Operations Highlights. U.S. Coast Guard Command Center Highlights: Law Enforcement. October 1999 through January 2001.  
<<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/commandcenter.htm/>> [26 April 2001].

- U.S. Congress. Hearing Before Caucus on International Narcotics Control, Miami, FL. 22 June 1998.  
<<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g%2Do/g%2Dopl/testimony/22jun98.htm/>> [18 March 2001].
- U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Government Reform. Hearing Before Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources.  
<<http://www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/lrs/docs/test00-01-27Salazar.htm/>> [29 April 2001].
- U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. Drug Control – Observations on U.S. Interdiction in the Caribbean. Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs and Criminal Justice. 23 May 1996.
- U.S. Department of State. 2001 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, Policy and Program Developments. Washington, DC: 2001.
- U.S. Department of Transportation. Fiscal Year 2000 Performance Report/Fiscal Year 2002 Performance Plan. Washington, DC: 2001.
- U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Press Releases. Operation Journey Dismantles Columbian Organization that Shipped Cocaine to 12 Nations. 26 April 2000.  
<<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/pubs/pressrel/pr082600.htm/>> [22 April 2001].
- U.S. General Accounting Office. Drug Control: Assets DOD Contributes to Reducing the Illegal Drug Supply Have Declined. Report to Congressional Requestors. Washington, DC: 1999.
- U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Counterdrug Operations. Joint Pub 3-07.4. Washington, DC: 17 February 1998.
- U.S. Navy, Chief of Information. Status of the Navy as of May 7, 2001. 7 May 2001. <<http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/news/.www/status.html/>>. [11 May 2001].
- U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy. National Drug Control Strategy: 2000 Annual Report. Washington, DC: 2000.
- U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy. National Drug Control Strategy: 2001 Annual Report, Report on Programs and Initiatives. Washington, DC: 2001.